

# High School Student Wins Federal Court Suit



Photo by E.F. Shawyer, Jr.

Dozens of news people and well-wishers tried to call 16-year-old Soni Romans, a Channelview High School junior, Monday afternoon, Jan. 31. But she wasn't home; she was staying after school to work on her school's new play, *Tom Jones*.

Earlier that day U. S. District Judge Allen B. Hannay had overturned the Channelview School Board's rule barring married or divorced students from participating in the school's extracurricular activities. Soni, who is divorced, took the school board to court last fall and last week—victory. Or, as her attorney, American Civil Liberties lawyer Ronald Cohen put it, the ruling "is a victory for all the students."

In his opinion, Hannay wrote, "Any and all extracurricular activities cannot rationally or legally be disassociated from school courses proper where they do or may form an element in future collegiate eligibility or honors, as here." He declared the policy "discriminatory" and "fundamentally inconsistent with the state's promise of a public education for its youth upon an equal basis."

Shortly after Soni enrolled at Channelview last fall, she found that, although she was making unusually high grades in both conduct and her academic courses, she was forbidden to participate in any extracurricular activities. She had been especially interested in choir and drama, and her grades would probably have made her a candidate for the National Honor Society. Soni had been married for a year, had delivered a baby (which she gave up for adoption) and had been divorced. The school district's rule on married and divorced students was apparently founded on the belief that such students, if allowed to mingle on campus with other students in non-academic situations, would engage in discussions about sexual matters. Oddly enough, this rule did not extend to unwed mothers who returned to school after having their babies.

"They told me I couldn't do something because I had been married, and it made me mad," Soni said. Soni and her parents, Jeanne and Alan Romans, attended a school board meeting last October to question the board on the rule; the board stood firm. Then, the ACLU took up the case, and by November the Romans had brought the Channelview school district into federal court.

Hannay did not immediately arrive at a decision. "They told us to exhaust all administrative remedies," Soni said. These attempts proved fruitless.

Over the last several months, the district has put Soni through a rather

extraordinary probe. In mid-December, after a court hearing, the district conducted an administrative hearing in which the attorney for the school board questioned Soni on an astonishing range of subjects concerning her personal life.

"I sat there and calmly told them whatever I had done in my whole life," Soni said. "By that time, I saw that their lawyer was pretty low, that he was going to fight to win, that he didn't care about me a bit."

Did their probing embarrass you? I asked. "I wasn't embarrassed. I'm not ashamed of anything I have done in my life," Soni answered composedly. "It just angered me that they could stoop so low."

She said that she felt it was basically none of the district's business whether students discussed sex in or out of school, although she added that sex wasn't much of a topic at Channelview until after the first school board meeting on the subject in October.

"The school board is very outdated," she said, "Almost every policy it goes by are the policies the school board members were brought up with."

"I don't feel like this is a victory against the school board," Soni said. "We're just telling them that they can't run our lives."

While the hearings, harassment and publicity have been something of an ordeal for Soni, she strikes one as exceptionally cool and self-possessed. She says she finds learning at Channelview enjoyable and likes the casual atmosphere of the classrooms there.

Soni does not consider herself a "radical" — "I wasn't out to get the school board; I just wanted to see some things changed," she says. She anticipates that the district may have to change more of its outdated rules now, with the precedent set by her case.

We asked Cohen if he planned to take on any more high school causes.

"I will continue to work on high school cases, not high school causes," he said. "That's how you win. You just bring before the court the human story of one person caught up in a punishing situation. That has to prevail."

Well, anyway, it did this time.

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# Letters

1217 Wichita, Houston, Texas 77004

## Feedback And Forth

Dear Space City!

I think it is about time I throw some feedback at y'all. When Space City News first came out 2½ years ago it was a very good newspaper. The people that put it out were the most politically advanced (for whites) in the city because they saw the need for an alternative press and proceeded to make it happen.

In the 2½ years I have been reading Space City I have seen your ups and downs and boy are you really down. What happened? Has that boot-licking liberal Rick Fine taken control? The paper contains very little news and information. This week there are only 10 articles concerned with news plus reviews of records, film and music.

That is just not enough information. There is just too much shit happening that people must be kept informed about. How about a backup story on Alex Rachly? How are the brothers and sisters in Chad doing? Your coverage of Baton Rouge sounds like KILT News.

I think that a good first step in improving the quality and quantity of information in the paper is to devote a full page to short news articles about different aspects of the worldwide struggle. The Militant and the Guardian have good articles to draw from. Your cartoons are not funny - more Freak Bros.

The main thing about your case that I really want to get down on is your treatment of the Lee Otis Johnson case. Lee Otis is a revolutionary brother that was framed by the power structure because he spoke his mind to the people. Lee Otis is a political prisoner. Why hasn't he been defended in a political manner. Howcum

when you covered the mass movements to free Huey P. Newton, Erika Huggens, Bobby Seale and John Sinclair, you never attempted to organize a mass movement to Free Lee Otis? All I have seen is a petition that I signed (sic) last year. No Free Lee Otis posters or buttons or demonstrations.

Randy Chapman had the right idea but lacked the impact of thousands of people. He did generate publicity about the case but didn't follow through with mass work. What I think needs to be done is for you people to use your prestige to bring together organizations and people sympathetic to having Lee Otis Free and starting a new improved Free Lee Otis Committee. The committee must have its shit together, be composed of people in all the communities in the Gulf Coast region, and be able to attract big time people like Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, Bob Dylan and the Lennons.

The committee should be able to mobilize chicano, Black and white youth and culture types into a giant concert-rally that will tell those jive ass punks like Preston Smith, Gus Mutcher, Mayor Louie and the Short-Singleton axis that we will not take any more of this bullshit that has been coming down. This is what must be done or the Space City staff will find itself in the cell next to Lee Otis.

You ask me to sign my first and last name unless I have a good reason. How's this for a reason. Houston is a town where people get cut down from church rooftops by PIGS because they think different. Houston is a town where a brother is given 30 years for a joint and few come to his defense. Houston is a town where a city council candidate is beaten and framed by the local pigs. Perhaps when Lee Otis is free then will I sign my name.

Free Lee Otis and Other Political Prisoners in Texas

A Houston Bro.

[Since "Houston Bro." has elected not only to air his grievances about Space City!, but to include what must be construed as a sectarian and personal slur against one of our most valuable reporters, Rick Fine, we feel it only fair to print that reporter's response. We will continue to do so in the case of

any personal attack on a Space City! staff member, if he or she considers it worth while. Again, we ask our readers to sign all letters, unless anonymity is necessary. We will be glad to withhold names upon request, but the cute signatures are getting a bit tiring. ]

"Boot-licking liberal," huh? Buster, you can lick mine any time. I don't have to justify my politics with you or anyone else. Yet if you know me at all, you'd eat those words mighty quick. For the sake of discussion, let's assume that the remainder of your letter is a bit more rational and sincere.

Your suggestions for improving the content of Space City! are, in my opinion, healthy and positive. You must realize, though, that broadening our scope virtually means expanding our staff, which is fine. Each Space City! staffer has his/her own personal interests, just like you do. So each of us makes a unique, yet vital, contribution to this newspaper. Thus it's about all we can handle to produce as much as we do. If you want to read more, someone will have to write more. So how about yourself? It takes no more time to write an article than it does to write us a letter. Well?

As far as Space City's "organizing a mass movement" goes, this paper has always tried to spread the word on whatever is happening, and staffers have actively participated in past coalitions. However, Space City! is far more than a political soapbox. Rather, Space City! is a mirror that reflects with minor distortions, the ups and downs of the movement and the counterculture. The responsibility of political action and leadership rests with the people, not with this paper.

You refused to sign your own letter for fear of police reprisals, while Space City! has surely suffered more than its share of right-wing terrorism. You seem ready and willing to shove such risks off onto this paper, local movement groups, "chicano, Black, and white youth and culture types" and anyone else that's handy. This is no time for armchair revolutionaries, friend.

-- Rick Fine

I came back to Houston with short hair and if I just had a dime for every mile I've walked lately because these freaks (with long hair flying, tape deck blaring, and sports car speeding down the road) wouldn't give me a ride. . .

Abbie Hoffman was right when he cut off his hair and said that long hair don't mean shit. Jerry Garcia said that long hair used to indicate an intelligent person, but now it indicates a doper. (Shit, man, I've been friends with a 26 gauge for years, but does that make me cool? I don't think so. Anyway, Spiro Agnew does more dope than most people I know. Think about that, super-cool-ego-dopers!)

This is just to notify everyone that I'm leaving Houston in search of the ultimate answer. Needless to say, I won't find it here. I received word that it may be happening in the mountains of Peru. Realizing that there are a few people left in Houston that have good heads, I promise to relay the ultimate answer to you as soon as I find it.

Kevin Hannan

## More Bug Tips

Sirs,

Bill Denning's article about taking care of the VW bug was very good, especially about maintenance. Follow his advice and you will do two things: a) fuck the system and b) get you to know and love your bug. You can't be friends until you understand its workings and needs.

But not enough was said about driving your bug. About shifting, those marks on the speedometer are maximum speeds. If you always shift at these speeds or higher, you will hurt your bug by trashing your engine's crankshaft journals egg shaped rather than round. Your engine will last only half as long as it should. The most economical, and happiest, shift points are at 12, 22 and 32 MPH. Memorize these numbers. Tatoo them on your elbow.

Do not drive at top speed on highways for long periods, especially in the summer. The VW depends on its oil system for cooling the engine and in these conditions it is marginal. The oil will heat up to 225 degrees F or higher, where it starts to lose its ability to lubricate at a much faster rate. Like Bill says, use the good quality oils and your car will be happier. I use 10W-40W in a good engine. If my engine is showing some age, I put in a can of STP or switch to 50W oil.

And when traveling, take a break every hour or so and roll one or drink a Coke or something. This gives your bug a rest, too, and you will both be happier when you get there.

Honorably yours,

Jim (Amazing) Graves  
Houston

[Ed, note: Thank you for your supplemental advice on Volkswagen care. However, we want to remind our readers once again that the letter opening "Sirs" is not only inaccurate but offensive to both male and female Space City! staff members. We repeat: there are no "sirs" or "gentlemen" on the Space City! staff.]

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by Victoria Smith

(This is the second in what is to be a new weekly Space City! feature, called 180 Degrees. 180 Degrees is to provide news and commentary on events in the Houston area.)

Last week was above all a week for unsolved mysteries in the news, plus the denouement of at least two significant courtroom dramas. We haven't any startling new insights guaranteed to unshroud the situation, but we do have lots of questions.

### HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT: WELLSRING OF IRREGULARITIES

A peculiar article appeared on the front page of the Houston Post, Monday, Jan. 31. Written by Ralph Williams, it was labeled "Post Exclusive," and was it exclusive! Few other local media would touch it, and the ones that did approached only with great trepidation.

I, too, would exercise caution in dealing with this incendiary issue, for reasons I will mention later. It seems that—according to the Post—an assistant arson investigator in the Houston fire department asked an assistant district attorney to drop a bribery charge against a private investigator. The names are, respectively, George Manos, Victor Pecorino and Dudley Bell, Jr., of Dudley Bell and Associates, 3100 Richmond.

A Harris County grand jury indicted Bell last October for allegedly trying to bribe a Houston police officer to misfile records at the police station. Williams quotes Pecorino as saying, "Manos told me that Bell had worked for Mayor Louie Welch during his campaign for re-election and that the mayor wanted the charges dropped." The article goes on to describe how Pecorino reacted to the request. "I couldn't drop the charges even if I wanted to. Besides, if the mayor wanted the charges dropped, he would have gone through the Police Department because they filed the charges." Manos and Welch denied the allegation.

The Post's background on the incident seems fairly sound. Bell and another man were charged last February with attempted arson, after a fire at a Houston club. The charges were dropped only hours after they had been filed. The Post at that time quoted Justice of the Peace Richard Millard, before whom the charges were brought, as saying he thought it was Fire Chief C.R. Cook who had the charges dismissed. Cook denied this. Bell was no-billed after the case was brought before a grand jury.

The bribery charge stemmed from another incident in which Bell allegedly offered Police officer Arthur McQueen \$300 to misfile index cards on himself and a client, the Post said. The cards are used to locate police records, and misfiling it would make it nearly impossible to find the records.

And that's the story.

I spoke with several people about this intriguing little piece, and everyone was "out", "in conference" or "looking into the thing." A number of people are "looking into" the story, including Manos whom I was able to reach by not giving the woman answering the arson division's telephone my name or business. When I told Manos what I wanted, he was abrupt and cryptic. "We're looking into it," he said. He said he *had* spoken with the Post reporter and probably intended to file suit against the newspaper. "Did you . . ." I began. "Well, we'll be seeing you," he said. "I've got to go run some errands."

A local television newsman told me that he had interviewed Bell, who told him he would be filing a \$3 million slander and libel suit against the Post and Williams. My attempts to reach Bell were frustratingly futile. I even left my unlisted telephone number with his secretary, but he didn't return the call. Pecorino seems to have been spending a good deal of time in court in the last two days. As of yet, no suits have been filed, and the Post apparently isn't going to worry about it until they are.

What interests me about this case is: 1) the Houston Fire Department, more than any other city or county institution, can't seem to keep its slip from showing; 2) If what the Post says is true, Pecorino and Manos seem to be completely lacking in cool and couth; 3) The story, at least as of Tuesday night, has not blown up into a major something-or-other. I guess the reasons for the latter are many and obvious. But, in any case, Ralph Williams and his supervisors deserve Space City!'s Uppity Fourth Estate Award of the Week: correct or incorrect, the Post sure has its nerve.

### MILLIONAIRE CONTRACTOR INDICTED

Thirty-three year old Raymond Novelli, a rather well-to-do Pasadena construction magnate, was indicted last week on charges of felony theft and embezzlement. The case shows encouraging signs of becoming Another Scandal, although not the one Novelli himself suggested immediately after his arrest.

The Novelli indictment is apparently the result of two years' work by police investigators, and it may be only the first in a series. "Before we're

through," said Assistant District Attorney Bob Bennett, "there will be about \$2 million in thefts involved." Bennett, incidentally, is also head of a new commission established by District Attorney Carol Vance to fight the incursion of organized crime into Houston. This is mentioned to suggest almost nothing, although unsubstantiated rumors were going around during the last city election that Novelli had connections with organized crime.

As you may recall, the people who initiated the dialogue (such as it was) on organized crime were Mayor Louie Welch and his backers. Ostensibly, the administration was merely pointing out its fine record in keeping the Mafia out of Houston: by insinuation, however, it implied that if Welch lost the election, organized crime would march its troops into the city as soon as the new mayor took office. The mayor's chief (and unsuccessful) opponent was Fred Hofheinz, and their campaign battle will leave a bitter taste in the mouths of some Houstonians for a long time.

With the Novelli arrest, insinuation once again raised its ugly head. Novelli called the indictment "purely political," and claimed that Welch forced the indictment because he, Novelli, had supported Hofheinz and planned to support other candidates in the statewide elections. Hofheinz, on Channel 13 News, calmly explained that he had been warned about Novelli and had refused to accept financial support from him. He produced a check, uncashed, which he said his headquarters had received from Novelli during the campaign. This apparently silenced media speculation that the arrest was politically provoked. Football season may be over, but, alas, it seems that the political football season never ends.

I later spoke with a local Democrat who told me that Novelli has helped finance or attempted to help finance a broad spectrum of politicians. It seems that neither the politics of nor the issues raised by those people is of much concern to the man.

Novelli is currently a partner in Triton Ventures, which is supposed to be a multi-million dollar construction firm. He listed his personal assets last May at \$6.8 million. A carpenter's helper at 17, Novelli reportedly made most of his fortune in contracting during his stay in Houston. He allegedly has business connections in Nevada and the Caribbean. He came to Houston in 1968 as a construction superintendent here for the Jacobean Construction Co. in Salt Lake City.

Novelli is charged with collecting huge kickbacks from subcontractors by encouraging them to overbid and then taking the remainder. The charges stem from the time he was working with Jacobean, which no longer owns a subsidiary in Houston.

It seems that Novelli's fortune has magnified mysteriously over the last few years and he now owns controlling interest in four small Texas banks and a savings and loan association. He also owns his own Lear jet and a small prop-driven plane at Hobby Airport.

Novelli was released after his arrest on \$5,000 bond. The case has aroused great curiosity, my own included. That's one of the great things about Texas, if you had nothing else to live for, you could exist merely to watch the unravelling of the next true-life enigma to hit the grand jury scene.

### WHO IS SILVA? WHAT IS HE?

At one point during the murder trial of Aureliano Silva, chicanos picketed the courthouse, essentially charging that the defendant was getting shafted because of his race. Certainly, the trial generated a good deal of publicity, but it is unclear whether that was due to "racial overtones" in the case. It may be that a courtroom battle between top state prosecutor Erwin Ernst and top Houston defense attorney Richard "Racehorse" Haynes just makes good news copy.

At any rate, I noted with great interest that when a deadlocked jury forced District Judge Dan E. Walton to declare a mistrial last Monday, Jan. 31, the one juror who stubbornly held out for acquittal was a black — the *only* black on the jury panel.

Lloyd Smith, 50, who is unemployed, reportedly said that the state did not convince him that the blood found on Silva's clothing was the same as that of Mrs. June Gleason, whom Silva is accused of murdering in November of 1970.

The trial malingered for 15 weeks. The jury debated for some 35 hours. It was the longest trial in Harris County history.

A disappointed Ernst said that he would probably retry the case. He also commented that he disliked the unanimous verdict system currently used in U. S. civilian courts, which says that every juror must agree on the verdict. He said he prefers the present British system which employs a 10 to 12 decision.

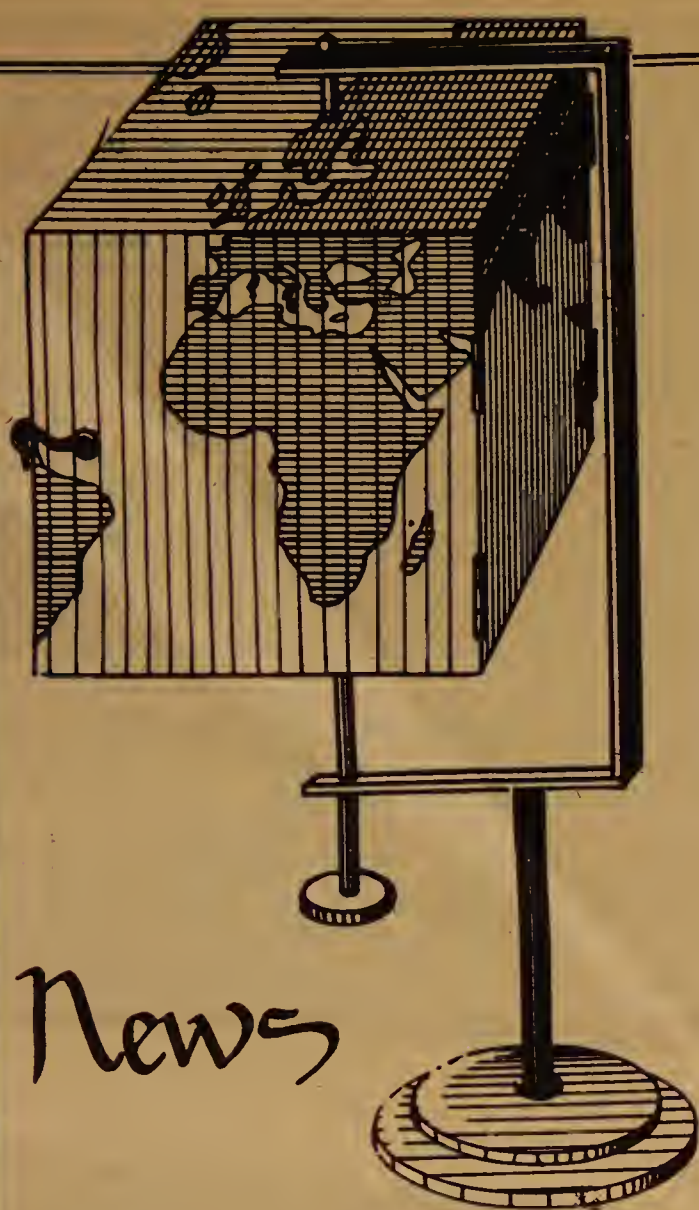
Haynes, a brilliant and exhaustive attorney, declared (rather un-brilliantly, I think) that "our system is the best. These people heard 38 days of evidence. They demonstrated conclusively that our system works."

They didn't demonstrate anything of the sort, of course. All that was shown was that one juror, a black, held out against 11 white jurors in a controversial trial involving a brown defendant. And whatever that may mean is anyone's guess.

### FARENTHOLD TO ANNOUNCE CANDIDACY

Rep. Francis Farenthold of Corpus Christi, an earnest and stalwart liberal leader in the Texas legislature, and a member of the notorious "Dirty Thirty", is expected to announce her candidacy for a high state office on Monday, Feb. 7. Farenthold, who pounded relentlessly away at the ethics issue in the last legislative session, says that she has become increasingly disgusted with state leadership during her four years in the Texas house. An attorney, Farenthold has won the reputation of being one of the few honest liberals in Texas politics, a rare breed to be sure.





## Slaughterhouse Ban To Be Appealed

ROCHESTER, Mich. — Kurt Vonnegut's novel *Slaughterhouse Five* goes on trial in this city Feb. 9.

The state's court of appeals will start hearing arguments on that date on a lower court ruling which banned the novel from local public schools last May. Judge Arthur E. Moore, in that opinion, described the book as "deeply disgusting" and "anti-Christian." He said it violated the "constitutional guarantees of separation of church and state." (The novel discusses the subject of religion and Christianity in particular.)

The Rochester board of education is appealing the decision, with help from the American Civil Liberties Union and the American Library Association.

Vonnegut, author of *Cat's Cradle*, is considered one of the contemporary "black humor" novelists and seems especially popular among teenagers and young adults. He is well known for his sharp satire on modern society.

## Youth Liberation Wins On Curfew

ANN ARBOR, MICH (FPS) After several months of work around the issue, Youth Liberation has convinced the city council to repeal the

local curfew laws. Youth Liberation argued that curfew laws discriminated on the basis of age, an unalterable physical characteristic; that curfew was enforced only against youths who the police didn't like (usually longhairs and black people); and that often young people leaving concerts at night were arrested in large numbers as they started home.

## Swiss Won't Extradite Tim

Mark another milestone and chalk up another victory for Aquarian prophet Timothy Leary.

Last week the Swiss government refused to extradite Tim back to California, because of formal errors in the U.S. request, according to UPI.

But the Swiss did not grant him political asylum, because Algeria had already done so and it will be up to Swiss immigration officials whether Tim can stay. However, his lawyer, Dr. Horace Mastronardi, is satisfied with the decision and believes Leary will be allowed to stay.

Leary has 30 days to appeal the refusal of asylum and may also apply for immigrant status.

## Officials Preparing For Convention Rumble

SAN DIEGO, CA. — Every official and politician in San Diego is saying publicly that he expects no problems during the Republican convention this year — and he is blithely going on his way making preparations for a Tet offensive.

The police department is asking for thousands of handcuffs, pepper gas, non-crack batons, and millions of dollars from the federal government.

Now a committee of San Diego judges is considering ways of keeping arrested protesters in jail during the convention. It seems that San Diego now has a set bail schedule which enables people arrested on misdemeanors to post a predetermined amount of money and go free without first seeing a judge. But some of the judges think it would be a good idea to keep any trouble makers in the slam until the convention closes — so they are considering suspending the procedure during the convention. That way they could detain the protesters for as long as forty-eight hours without having to bring them into court. They would then have to appear before a judge before being arrested.

The convention is only expected to last three days, and such a procedure

would help San Diego lawmen keep those they consider problem-makers behind bars until the President makes his acceptance speech.

Meanwhile the San Diego County Bar Association is working out plans for giving legal aid to arrested demonstrators. San Diego attorney Michael Reed says the sheriff has told him local lawyers will have access to prisoners no matter where they are detained. Reed says up to four hundred attorneys will be on call throughout the convention to protect the rights of arrested demonstrators.

-- Lew Irwin

## Jury Selection Continues In Conspiracy Trial

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Jury selection continues this week in the conspiracy trial of Rev. Philip Berrigan and six other anti-war activists.

The seven are charged with conspiring to raid draft boards around the country, to blow up heating tunnels between federal buildings in Washington D.C. and to kidnap presidential advisor Henry A. Kissinger.

Dozens of veniremen have been questioned in the U.S. District Court of Judge R. Dixon Herman by U.S. Attorney William A. Lynch, Herman himself and five defense attorneys. The defense team, one of the most prestigious assembled for any trial in recent history, includes former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, longtime leftist attorney Leonard Boudin and liberal politician and New York lawyer Paul O'Dwyer.

Potential jurors were questioned extensively on their feelings toward the war in Vietnam, dissident lifestyles and the proper conduct of Catholic priests and nuns.

All but one of the defendants is Catholic. They are, Father Berrigan, 49; Sister Elizabeth McAlister, 32; the Revs. Neil McLaughlin, 31, and Joseph Wenderoth, 36; Anthony Sceblick, 31 and Mary Sceblick, 33. The remaining defendant is Eqbal Ahmad, 41, a Pakistani and Moslem.

The seven were indicted 14 months ago, after FBI director J. Edgar Hoover let it be known that his organization had supposedly uncovered a remarkable plot to kidnap Kissinger. The U.S. Justice Department took over and devised an elaborate conspiracy case against numerous people. The federal grand jury in Harrisburg, in its initial indictment, named co-conspirators, including Berrigan's brother Daniel, also a Catholic anti-war activist. The grand jury later handed down a second indictment which essentially broadened the

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original to include the draft record charge. Both Berrigans are currently serving prison terms for destruction of draft records, although Daniel recently won parole.

According to Newsweek, the second conspiracy charge carries a maximum sentence of five years and \$10,000 (a lesser sentence than the original charge) but "it makes a conspiracy conviction more likely, perhaps unavoidable" because of its broad wording. Newsweek predicts that the prosecution is bound to win some sort of conviction and adds that the Harrisburg trial "should be fascinating to watch."

## That W - - - Again

CHERRY HILL, N.J. - Vocalist Genya Ravan, who was appearing on the same bill with Sly & The Family Stone at the Cherry Hill Arena, was arrested Friday night, December 10, and booked on a "disorderly misdemeanor" charge for using "loud and profane language" during the performance. The hearing will be on January 4 at 7:00 p.m. Maximum penalty is six months in prison or a \$500 fine.

According to witnesses, Miss Ravan opened the show to an unruly and boisterous crowd that was calling for Sly. "We all know why you're here. You're all here to see Sly. That's fine," replied Genya. "If you can't dig more music, then I'll get the fuck off. If you do, I'll shut the fuck up."

When she finished her set, Genya received a standing ovation and the manager of the hall made her take two encores. Back in her dressing room, Genya heard from her road manager that concert promoter Ken Roberts was angry and had told him "Genya Ravan is a dirty act. She's getting arrested."



Photo by Thorne Dreyer

Forty-five minutes later, as Sly was opening his set, four policemen and two matrons arrested Genya and took her to the police station. Her conga drummer, Bernard Williams, was also brought to the station for attempting to get onstage and tell Sly what had happened to Genya.

Genya was released at 1:30 a.m. Saturday after her road manager posted a \$105 bond. Charges against Williams were dropped.

"If they're going to worry about that word, they'd better take off a lot of movies, most rock groups, and Sly himself," said Genya. "Even the cops thought it was stupid."

## Liferaft

Late nite radio helmsmen Jeff (Ol' Lightnin') Shero and sidekick Mr. Hay Seed were overcome by cynide fumes while floating down the Houston ship channel on a Liferaft. Recovery is expected to take three months. An official of Armco Steel denied any knowledge of the source of the effluent, but sent a bouquet of Venus Fly Traps. Ol' Lightnin' Shero gasped, "Cough. Cough. Isn't industrial progress wonderful!" *Moonshadow* will replace *Liferaft* on Pacifica's (FM 90) 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. programming.

## You hear a lot of Sam Neely's story in his music.

It is a medium-straight-but-true sort of success story that began in Cuero, Texas, and hasn't changed locale more than a hundred miles in any direction in the 23 years since. Except once. That time, Sam Neely came to Hollywood to record his first Capitol album, "Long Road to Texas."

About seven years ago, Sam started playing with rock groups; then, later, he became an apprentice welder; still later, he played in honky tonks. And all the time, no matter what else, he's been a writer. And a singer. Of simple, basic, utterly pleasing and thoughtful music—life-reflections.

Now Sam Neely's story can be told in Texas and 49 other states.

## Long Road to Texas

*Sam Neely*





# Platter Chatter

I was very sorry to hear of the disruption of last Friday's (Jan. 25) torrid White House party. If you haven't heard by now Carol Feraci, a member of the Ray Conniff Singers, pulled a small silk banner from that eons old woman's intimate hiding place between her breasts. The sign read 'STOP THE KILLING.' The lady, a Canadian citizen and a new member of Ray's Corral then delivered a brief speech imploring Nixon to stop the war and saying that "if Jesus Christ were in this room tonight, you would not dare to drop another bomb."

You can imagine the effect this little incident had upon even the most uninhibited Republican swinger. Most interesting of all were the comments upon the incident made by what the Silent Majority apparently consider the foremost spokesman of America here in 1972: Billy Graham, Dicky's portable balm to ease his conscience, stated that Ms. Feraci was "very rude, no matter how strongly she felt."

Dewitt Wallace, who is in charge of dispensing his particular brand of soporific pap monthly through the Reader's Digest was "disgusted" and glad that Ms. Feraci was "escorted from the room." (A fancy term meaning kicked out) directly into the tender arms of the Secret Service for 75 minutes of questioning.

Bob "The Pig" Hope, eagerly licking at the back door of power, said that it was a "shameful thing. It's terrible for anyone to take advantage of the President like that."

Of course there may be a few hundred thousand mothers, fathers, sons, wives and children on both sides of the Pacific whose lives have been ended, ruined or saddened forever by this war but never mind them. Also, it strikes me as odd that a comedian would come out against free speech. Granted a social occasion may not have been the most proper place to beg the president to halt a senseless slaughter but just how many times does the person-in-the-street have to come within hailing distance of a president? Is it now *rude* to protest the waste of human beings' lives? What kind of hell have we made for ourselves?

With all the competition, famous wag Martha "talk now, think next week" Mitchell had to go some to come out on top but in her usual fashion she won tongues down for saying, "She should be torn limb from limb."

Pravda should have a real good time with that remark. Ordinarily I am against euthanasia but no doubt there are some exceptions. And so, the incident passes into history. Remember this come November when your next chance comes.

Two brief AP releases may rekindle some faith in the species *homo sapiens*: According to the Associated Press, a World War II Japanese army sergeant, who hid in the Guam jungle for 28 years rather than surrender to U.S. troops, seems to be having a slight adjustment problem that may delay his return home. Shoichi Yokoi, 58, was recently discovered near his cave in Guam, hallucinating. Japanese news reports say he repeatedly mumbles about his buddies who were killed in battle or who had died in the jungles.

Also from the Associated Press: A Yugoslav stewardess survived a six mile fall from Yugoslav jetliner that was blown apart over Czechoslovakia last week. Vesna Vulovic, 23, who fell to earth while strapped to her seat, suffered bruising of the brain, broken vertebrae and various cuts, bruises and fractures. She is expected to live. Twenty seven others on the flight, including the crew, were killed.

Tracy Nelson/Mother Earth \*\*\* Warner-Reprise \*\*\* S1 20m 01s S2 20m 03s  
Right away you know this is one of those "total feeling" jobs. Tracy's glidingly smooth honey voice floats into your troubled brain like a hot shower on knotted muscles. Mother Earth looses blues of the country on us; songs by Eric Kaz, Bob Charles, John Hiatt, one by guitarist Jack Lee and some others. Only John Andrews & Tracy remain from the original Mother Earth in the *Living With the Animals* days.

Mostly Tracy with the current five backing up. Lots and lots of Nashville cats helped on background vocals. A fine, graceful record. Tracy has an ethereal voice best backed by just this sort of restrained guitar, bass, muted drums and the tasty piano of Andrew James McMahon. A disc for the whole you - not the body and not just the mind. 91. And yes, the group still runs with dogs, the total of three pictured on the cover is down a bit from their high of seven on *Living with the Animals* although besting the solo, soulful pooch of *Make a Joyful Noise*.

Cass Elliott \*\*\* RCA \*\*\* S1 15m 41s S2 16m 54s

Cass enlisted 10 background vocalists with Carl Wilson & Bruce Johnston of the Beach Boys, Venetta Fields and Clydie King being the biggest names. Fifteen musicians are in her rhythm section, along with eight horns and Beeny's choice string section. Cass puts this crew behind ten songs; two from Randy Newman, and one each from the pens of James Braken, Leah Kunkel, Bobby Darin, Bill Dean, Marilyn Messina, Van McCoy and Bruce Johnston. Anything else; Almost forgot the token God-rock number this time supplied by Judee Sill. ("Jesus was a Cross Maker".)

Cass gets right into things with "I'll be Home" but the question arises as to just who would want to wait at home for her. Vocally she does use some finesse and restraint and her backup is certainly, well, skilled; it is just that the whole thing is not folk, nor rock but cloying crescendos of soft pop. "Baby I'm Yours" is certainly a goldie but one better left in the dustbin of bygone days.

Cass married a count I hear so maybe she'll go abroad. As it is or until she does the best way to listen to this is from a distance. Like across town. Keep at it Cass. Kate Smith won't be around forever. 58

I'm the One \*\*\* Annette Peacock \*\*\* RCA \*\*\* S1 19m 14s S2 17m 10s

Annette produced, directed, wrote, arranged, sung, played acoustic & electric piano, synthesizers, electric vibraphone and wrote the liner notes. Three pages of promo reveal absolutely nothing about her except that she lives in the West Village of NYC and "she matured in your town. She lived in her mind & in the rush of cosmic being. She was and she is. Today she is music." *I'm the One* includes 13 others but in the end Annette's mournful voice gets on your nerves;



Annette Peacock

even on the only non-original tune "Love me Tender." There are too many screams and not nearly enough electronics.

An amalgam of blues, synthesizer and jazz. Not very exciting but the cover is a grabber. Inside the lady herself says:

"Pain & Pleasure are equal but different  
One is no better than the other  
THEY ARE EQUAL ... BUT DIFFERENT"

A little less pain please for those of us who actively pursue hedonism. You can pass this one up. 73

## Rock & Roll Revival

What went on at the rock and roll revival in Hofheinz Pavilion last Sunday, Jan. 30, wasn't a revival as much as it was a remembrance of things past, a little nechrophilia. Perhaps it wasn't even called for. Rock and roll

is not yet at the point at which it has to be revived. Maybe nudged, but not revived.

The look at our roots did *some* good, but it was a little disturbing. If it hadn't been for the dancing on the main floor, a lot of people would have gone home disappointed. I tend to think that some did anyhow. There was simply not that much aesthetic value to the show.

The general atmosphere before Sunday had been one of euphoria. Something like what went around after Sha Na Na played last year, and I suppose a lot of people thought it



would be like that concert. But it wasn't, because where Sha Na Na, in their gold lame jumpsuit regalia, was making fun of 50's rock the people that played Sunday were really serious. A revival, a bringing back.

Sha Na Na triggered the good feelings from those early years, making you laugh at the absurdities. But when the Dovells did "The Bristol Stomp" and "Hully Gully" it was sad; they wanted you to believe again. They were really trying and it wasn't all that good. They were all too reminiscent of everything back then, both good and bad. It was the same with Gary U.S. Bonds doing "New Orleans" and "Quarter to Three." He was just another guy to a lot of people, and those songs weren't classics as much as they were antiques.

Things seemed to get worse as the evening progressed. By the time Bo Diddley came on you wanted to get out before you remembered something a little too painful for comfort. You saw how good Bo used to be but he is 42 and still playing Bo Diddley; it was embarrassing to have him do "Shut Up Woman" and realize that four years ago you might have thought it was a really fine song, acting out the part with your girlfriend later.

Sensibilities have changed, Bo. Even the Coasters with "Charlie Brown" only brought back images of ducktails, white shirts, turned up collars and a toughness I never could muster. But those boys weren't as cool as we thought then. They were tough, rebels, but without a cause and is that really anything to remember proudly?

Chuck Berry saved me, though. His music is timeless. A little of the same all the way through but basically what rock and roll is all about: a driving rhythm and a sense of freedom that cut us loose from a lot of chains, letting us find out it was fun to be alive. He made the night worth it. He seemed to be the same thing that night that he had always been, and it was good to know he was still going. Because so are we.

-- John Carroll

"The Backbone of the Whale":

## Cambiata Soloists

"The Backbone of the Whale," Cambiata Soloists - Jan. 28, at Rice University.

The occasion of Shakespeare set in song. The songs, in turn, in a setting of "instrumental" chamber music. Chamber music in a setting of Shakespeare (the ribs may have been Chaucer, Rilke, Brecht, Rimbaud, Block - but this was Shakespeare's whale).

In re-view, or re-hear, the concert was overall the moribund in immanence, with shots of vigor. Springtime ... music and dance ... divertimento ... love music ... dark and lightly: beneath an Ocean. Death music and drowning. "... all shall be Sailors ..."

The opening Divertimento (Haydn) was well-stated by violin, horn and a cello who plays in tune! Samuel Thiel gave us plenty of robusto and brilliant horn work. Roman candle.

Three songs after William Shakespeare (Stravinsky);

Musick to hear

Full fadom five

When daisies pied, gave the first verbal clue to coming deep waters, although the clue was pretty transparent at full fadom five. The composer's exquisite lines were retraced adequately by Isabelle Lipshutz, vocal, and flute, clarinet, viola in harmonics - especially by flutist David Bonner. Contrapuntal lilt?

Next, Harry Clark delivered an incredibly intense Suite No. 5 for Un-

accompanied Cello (Bach) still playing in tune.

Four Figures of a Crowned Maiden: Ophelia (1972) by Yvar-Emilian Mikhashoff, who conducted the entire ensemble, complete with narrator, brought the first half of the concert to full tide. So many long, high notes and so many poets' words with scarcely time for a breath - and it was all about drowning. It was a very apt reminder of our mortality. Only an intermission could follow.

Songs of Ophelia (Brahms) and two songs by John Dowland and Thomas Morely (Isabelle Lipshutz, vocal, and Wolfgang Justen, guitar and lute) took up the message after intermission. The guitar (the only electronic instrument present was the harpsichord) and lute were the special life-savers of the concert.

But C.M. von Weber's Trio, Op. 63 (flute, cello, piano), an exciting un-complex of sparkle and charm won the evening's applause from so sated a bunch of penguins we, the "audience," were by now.

Four Fragments from the Canterbury Tales, by Lester Trimble (voice flute, clarinet, harpsichord) - simple "Twentieth Century" rhythms, chording, dancy, love heavy - was the conclusion.

The Cambiata Soloists are unusual in so intense an application to their chosen music. "Off" temp; are soon "on." The Concert: Permeation I; the

Bard Permeation II; Intimacy, then the robusto, then the gentle, then intimacy at length - delightful pronounced lengthy.

-- Cary Griffin

## Menuhin at Jones Hall

The name Yehudi Menuhin has for many people, myself included, a certain mystique. "Violin virtuoso," "prodigy" and "genius" are the immediate visceral responses. However, at last Sunday's concert (Jan. 29) at Jones Hall, I had my first opportunity to hear one of the "big names" perform in person and I found few of these qualities in evidence.


The Menuhins, violinist Yehudi and pianist Hephzibah, opened the program with Brahms, Sonata No. 2 in A major, Op. 100. This sonata is not a virtuoso piece; very few fast notes, no great technical difficulties. But the music requires some measure of genius in performance. One requisite is an even, warm tone with enough power to support the soaring lines that are typical of Brahms. I found Mr. Menuhin's bow arm so unsteady in the lower part of the bow that much strength and security was missing, not to mention

the resulting lack of freedom and warmth in the tone when one is using only half the bow. The performance was somewhat tense and not very interesting.

The next piece was Bartok's Sonata (for violin alone), written for Yehudi Menuhin in 1944, and premiered by him at Carnegie Hall that year. One would expect a performer to be somewhat more at ease with a work which must be, after 28 years, very familiar. Of course, the Bartok sonata is full of hair raising technical feats and has the reputation of being the most difficult of all violin pieces to memorize. The music has the unmistakable feel of Bartok from the first moment. Thorny dissonance and restless driving rhythm diluted with the alien (to our ears) folk melodies of Bartok's native Hungary. All this the utterance of a kind and gentle man obsessed with the sadness of a world war and his own exile in an unsympathetic land, New York City of the forties. The translation of these violent passions into sound requires an ultimately flexible performer.


There were a few moments during the performance when one could see and hear what Yehudi Menuhin can do with Bartok's sonata. On the whole, however, I had the impression that self-consciousness and uneasiness stole some of the immediacy and poignancy from the music, and replaced it with doubts and fears of an altogether different nature. Nonetheless, it was

cont. on 10



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A scene from the film "The Birth of a Nation"

# I Love You D.W. Griffith

by Alex Stern

copyright 1972, Alex Stern

So picture this: A Young Girl sits in her Ford Falcon on a LONELY PARKING LOT, while HOOLIGANS! FROM THE MOB! CRASH! IN! HER! WINDOWS!!

Subtle, no? It's just a particularly brutal variation on your basic damsel-in-distress. And there's more: SHE'S SCREAMING! And there's a BASH! and a CRASH! and a BANG! and a SHATTER!

You can't just be blind. Oh yes, and there's a particularly high-pitched form of music blaring on the soundtrack. Close your eyes, and the movie will have you bleeding from the ears.

II

The scene is from a movie called *The Organization*. A movie with an absolute passion for mediocrity. What is sometimes referred to in the movie biz as a DumbJob. That scene is the only effective one in the movie — and make no mistake, it is effective.

Exegesis makes the scene look pretty stupid, and of course it is. But it also works: one sits in the audience with the movie pushing that sort of thing at you, and you jump out of your skin.

But for what reason? The girl means nothing to us; her character has been left totally undeveloped. We are totally unmoved by the gratuitous thrill passed on in the next scene: she was "tortured — by professionals who enjoyed their work." Terrific — but who cares?

This is a test of just how passive the previous audience excitement was: no one really cared about the girl at all. The audience reacted not to her dilem-

ma, but to the movie itself. To the noise and the close-ups and the "classy" shot-angles.

III

*The Organization* is beneath contempt, but I would nominate that scene as The Most Characteristic of 1971. Not the Best Scene, but the Most Characteristic.

Better scenes come from better films. If I had to pick a "Best Ten" list for 1971, I could pick only seven: *The Conformist*, *The Last Picture Show*, *Claire's Knee*, *Sunday Bloody Sunday*, *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, *WR — Mysteries of the Organism* and *Modern Times*. And even then, I'm cheating; Chaplin's *Modern Times*, currently in re-release, was premiered in 1936.

Unfortunately, I could include none of the above films on a list of Most Important. Those would include *A Clockwork Orange*, *The French Connection*, *El Topo*, *Dirty Harry*, *Straw Dogs*, *The Devils* and *Willard*. "Importance" in the movie business is generally a function of box-office receipts. Which in turn means that we'll likely be seeing more of the same.

The "important" movies have something else in common besides money — and in common with that scene from *The Organization*. Total manipulation.

IV

The Great American Irony (Movie Division) seems to be that just as film has become "art" (read "respectable"), it is also ceasing to exist. Of course, the American movie industry has been dying for so long that it makes Broadway, that other "fabulous invalid," look positively robust. According to a recent estimate, Hollywood's losses since only 1968 amount to more than \$500 million. Whichever way you slice that, a lot of people are sitting at home watching Flip Wilson.

There's no doubt that television —

and the sort of audience response television is breeding into several generations of Americans — is killing the movie business. But not, I think, in the obvious ways. Not by keeping people home, or even through the new gimmick of producing "movies for television." The real problem is that movie people have now begun producing television shows for movie theatres.

Television, it should be obvious, is simply not interested in evoking a response from its viewers. In the case of television, response would (hopefully) precede rejection.

Such a simple idea, television: relax in your seat, and the tube does the work. One doesn't have to get excited during that chase scene on *Hawaii Five-O*, because the soundtrack will beat you over the head until you get the point. Don't bother getting genuinely interested in what's coming up next: the camera will anticipate everything — usually in tight close-ups. Even laughter at Lucy's antics is unnecessary; the box laughs for you.

Bad art, of any sort, has always existed. It performs the sole function of absorbing time. Trash novels, Muzak, whatever. But heretofore, television has been unique among the arts in its *in toto* reliance on the passive audience. The "cool" medium.

Now, however — whether taking a cue from McLuhan's endless rhapsodizing or simply from failing grosses — movies have begun to use the same audience/event relationship. In doing so, certainly, the problem is immediately multiplied: if television can get the job done with the use of a small, hazy image and a tinny sound system, how much more effective can the same methods be on a large screen — with wrap-around sound to constrict the eardrums? It is, as they say, a "natural."

V

This is what 1971 ultimately means in terms of film. Even dumb movies

have learned how to get the message across; shovel it into the seat.

The degree of success in this manipulation varies from film to film, but the basic methodology remains the same. Although all of the films on my Most Important list contain elements of the standard "thriller," none generates excitement so much as it manufactures it.

They don't work you up; they work you over.

VI

Back in the '50s (remember the '50s?), there was an experience labelled *This is Cinerama* (remember Cinerama?). Its most famous sequence was a ride on a roller coaster. The camera made us feel (more or less) as though we were on that roller coaster and audiences were ralphing from coast to coast.

But it was just a trick, and nothing more. For several directors lately, however, that trick seems to have become an occupation. Like Ken Russell.

Russell, purveyor of such goods as *Ken Russell's Devils* and *Ken Russell's Boy Friend* came to movies via the BBC. In the early '60s, Russell was responsible for a series of brilliant television documentaries. For his recent movie career, the operative word seems to be not "brilliant," but "television."

The list of atrocities vended by *The Devils* is too long and sickening to go into. The important thing is that we're not invited to *look* at the sexual hysteria and violence that Russell feels was endemic in 17th Century French religious life — we're *in* it.

Russell's spasmodic camera lovingly reports each detail of the leg-breakings and what not, and to no purpose but to slam the audience into the aisles. As in television, nothing is left to the imagination, for that would demand that the viewer put forth a little effort. Without a doubt, the film is effective, but can this be art?



## VII

What unfashionable concerns, large general concepts like "art" and "morality" have become. Surely, criticism must make some concessions to the work at hand – not the least of which is to look at it *on its own terms*. But when that is done, the critical function should not, must not be finished. The terms themselves must ultimately become a matter of equal concern.

"Experience is all" can be a fun way to run a life for a while, but it's a crummy critical point of view.

*The Devils* made the mistake of pretension. Russell seemed trying to make us believe that this film was essentially an intellectual dialogue. And of course few people were fooled.

*The French Connection*, by contrast, is totally without pretension. The film – like its cop hero, Popeye – sets out merely to get the dirty job done. That the dirty job was done dirty is beside the point.

Or is it? Without a doubt, the direction is incredibly shrewd, and the film delivers all the zaps it intends to. But is that enough?

I interviewed the director of *The French Connection*, William Friedkin, and was not at all surprised to find that the film had been cut. The film as shown is drastically shorter than it should have been. The completeness of what could have been a truly fantastic movie has been sacrificed to its current brutal slickness. The movie could now almost be retitled *Show Me the Good Part*.

I was surprised to find that it was the director who cut it. I'm more used to the evil studio destroying the genius director's work of art (Welles, Ophuls and on and on) – so I was unprepared for Friedkin's nonchalance.

Probably, he got what he wanted – and we get, perhaps, what we deserve. A movie with no padding, a thriller with no life.

Characters are bumped off and cars are dropped with little or no attention to the plot development. And why should we worry about the plot, when we get to see the characters bumped off and the cars dropped?

The big scene of the movie – a chase between a car and an elevated train (which I found overlong) – was almost salvaged at the very end. Popeye (expertly played by Gene Hackman) has finally caught his man. Then, out of fatigue and desperation and hatred and fear, Hackman kills him. Dead. But the movie just moves right along to the next thrill, and we never get any hint of the importance of that scene. Does this force the dope ring's hand? Is Hackman upbraided for not giving the crook a chance to spill the beans? What has happened?

Ultimately, the answer is, nothing. The longest sequence in the movie – and a fleeting confrontation of incredible power and grace – is a red herring. It doesn't do anything or lead anywhere.

When I asked Friedkin about the scene, he replied that it was simply for the audience to – and used a euphemism for masturbation that I don't think I have to telegraph. The reference is telling though, in what it says about audiences for these new television movies. Basically, they're not an audience at all; they're a group of individuals.

These movies ask for no group response; they simply lay you out, one by one. Such an idea is not in theory wrong, but there is something wrong, artistically and morally wrong, about blowing the audience sky-high and then not giving them any place to land.

## VIII

The best movie I saw in 1971 was D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*, made in 1914. *The Birth of a Nation*, too, has elements of a conventional thriller; in fact, it set the conventions. It has a chase, and set the mold for the typical chase montage: cutting back and forth between the chasers and the chasees.

But there's a crucial difference between the excitement this film generates and the sort of zaps these new movies peddle. In *The Birth of a Nation*, the great chase sequence is given force, not by mere camera trickery alone (and certainly not by its score), but by our attachment to the characters involved. Real people have emerged from the screen, and when they are in trouble, we feel it.

There is another distinction worth noting. Instead of a confrontation between cop and thug, or between young girl and hooligan, *The Birth of a Nation* presents us with the Klan – bedsheets and all – on their way to rescue a party of whites from the clutches of the uppity Negroes.

Griffith's film is blatantly racist, that's all there is to it. After all the excuses have been litanized, that fact remains – and our latter-day sensibilities are much abused. But at the crucial moment, we react.

Because we have been moved – not brutalized – into reacting, we resist decades of knee-jerk liberalism to cheer at the climax. To overcome our preconceptions – not to reinforce them – that's a definition of art.

*The publication of this essay – one in a series of five – was made possible by The Stern Foundation.*

# Revival of A 1932 Horror Film: Freaks

by Alex Stern

Like no other enterprise I can think of, the movie industry wallows in its own legends about itself. And there are few more fertile veins of legend than that surrounding the making, censoring, banning and eventual re-birth of Tod Browning's 1932 horror masterpiece, *Freaks*.

The facts of the matter are disarmingly simple: 1) a hard-working, competent director (Browning) had a big success with *Dracula* in 1931. 2) MGM rewarded his success by letting him work on a project he had talked about, a circus story. 3) Browning began filming, after importing quite a few circus performers from around the world. And finally, 4), the film was finished and ready for release.

Now fantasy – or maybe just Hollywood – takes over. First you should know that at this time the chief of production at Metro was Irving J. Thalberg – the nervous, driven Boy Wonder of the industry. During the period that *Freaks* was in the works, Thalberg had been working on *Grand Hotel*, Metro's biggie of 1932. The production details on a project like *Grand Hotel* must be endless – especially when the movie was using practically every name star on the lot. And even more especially when the lot is Metro's: "More Stars Than There Are in Heaven" and all that sort of thing. Anyway, the upshot was that neither Thalberg nor – apparently – anyone else saw any of the rushes for *Freaks*.

It appears that the first time the finished *Freaks* was shown was at a press preview with Thalberg in attendance. A horror film, to be sure, with

a circus setting. The studio was optimistic about the film's chances for success – although, of course, not overly concerned about it one way or the other. Well, the preview began and just into the second reel of the film, a lady journalist (her name lost to history, alas) ran screaming up the aisles. The screening was stopped, and the heat was on.

*Freaks* was cut and re-cut. Banned in 20 states and Great Britain. Anathematized by the Legion of Decency. Hounded by the Hays Office.

Browning was not forced to ride a rail out of town, but then he never found many jobs either. He lived until 1962, and made a grand total of four more films in those 30 years. He did live, however, to see the bans lifted on the film – and the first real attempts made to piece it back together.

AN AUDIENCE EVENT . . .

You can see the film yourself – all that remains anyway – this week at the Bellaire theatre. (In the original, we are told, the Strong-Man was emasculated. Funny, but that footage seems to have been the first to drop on the cutting-room floor, and has never been recovered. The rest of the film – so far as anyone can tell – is intact.)

All in all, *Freaks* is probably the smartest horror film ever made. It's not as curdling as *The Island of Lost Souls*, nor quite as repulsive as *Night of the Living Dead*. But oh my god, is it smart.

The drama of *Freaks* is in the audience. The film is so compassionate towards these "mistakes of nature," and the audience warms to their innocence, their laughter, their good old American gumption. The "normal" people, on the other hand, are at the very least jaded – and more often cruel. Before long, the audience is practically lighting incense for the dear little pin heads and what-ers.

Until the climax, that is. At which point, honey, those creatures are *freaks*. Slimy. Disgusting. Freaks.

LONG BEFORE FELLINI . . .

Browning, just for the record, doesn't strike me as a great talent who finally got his one big chance. Nothing in his other films suggests that he was even so talented as James Whale. But Browning – aside from assembling a cast of such unique "talent" – had one good idea, and that was sufficient to make *Freaks* what it is: a horror classic. Long before Fellini, Browning seems to have realized that the mass audience has some pretty strong ideas about the relationship between Original Sin and physical deformity. Tap that Mother Lode, and stand back. If you are weak of stomach – or young of age – I suggest you do the same.

# Fanny!

Though impressive as one of the first female rock 'n' roll groups to be makin' it in a predominantly male industry, Fanny was an artistic and personal disappointment when they appeared at Liberty Hall last weekend.

Friday morning, before their first show, we sat around on the floor of their room in the new space age flash Holiday Inn and talked with them about their music and themselves as people. About their music, they say they like people to have a good time.

Alice and Jean: "When we're feeling it together it's magic . . . you can't go wrong when the feelin's there." They talked about when Fanny began working together about two years ago in L. A., doing gigs at college campuses, bachelor balls, fraternity parties. They said that they played boogie music, wriggled around, and everybody danced.

Two albums later (with another to be released Valentine's Day, called *Fanny Hill*) they still play boogie music and wiggle around. The group's reliance on Jean in her black knit jump suit for flash and sex appeal detracts from its real strengths: Nicole on piano, the gutsy vigor of Alice on drums, and the fine harmony of all their voices. They can sing.

Fanny seems to cop their flash from popular '60-'70 R and R groups: the Beatles, Buffalo Springfield, Rolling Stones, so their slick riffs are easily recognized as derivative. It's boogie time. Jean, June, Nicole and Alice have

apparently aspired to a certain musical height, heretofore only achieved by men. In doing so they have produced a slick imitation of male music which though tightly constructed and highly rhythmic, lacks original style and creativity. Soul.

When we asked them about woman's liberation, Nickey said, "Before people started asking us about women's lib, we didn't think about it because if anything we're liberated. We're doing what we want to do. We always have. We're working for Fanny and by working for Fanny we're probably opening up a new field for women."

When asked what their respective "ole men" thought about their music, Nicole responded, "We've always been musicians." Alice: "We put our music first." Nickey: "I couldn't possibly fall in love with somebody who I knew was opposed to the idea of the group."

Okay. Women who are dedicated to something besides their home and husbands, but how aware are they that the music they listen to, study, and make has been originated by males?

Yoko Ono, Malvina Reynolds, Bessie Smith, Nina Simone and Dory Previn come to mind as women who create their own style of music unique from any other.

The girls in Fanny mentioned that their next album, *Fanny Hill*, was written and recorded almost entirely in Apple Studios on their last trip to England. They feel that it is more real and more spontaneous than any of the others. It will be interesting to listen to see if any womanly soul comes through.

Sassafras and Brown Sugar

For another view on Fanny, turn the page!



# Fanny: Look Again

The dudes who had been carried out in the rain by their ladies to hear an L.A. group called Fanny wondered what all the excitement was about. The rest of the full house was real curious too.

Would they be treated to an evening of soft, close harmony folk-rock? Not so. After four or five bars of the opening number, the crowd, mouths hanging, eyes bugging and ears ringing, knew Fanny was not joking. No frills, no complex musical trips; this group rocked hard and simple. The swaying crowd flipped out.

With bassist Jean Millington and pianist Nickey Barclay leading on vocals, Fanny boogied through an original tune in close, professional style. Then they flew into a real nice arrangement of the Beatles' "Hey Bulldog." The people were really getting off to the music by now. Only Los Angeles could produce something like this; other cities would have guys in drag.

Nickey hurts her finger on the keyboard but says she'll play anyway. Away they go. Personally, I was curious how they would sound if they'd had to finish as a trio. The show rocks along. It's dancing in the aisles and I flash that Fanny is almost like having the Ronettes play their own instruments.

Jean does a feature vocal and really pours in on. By now everyone is realizing just how tite and together these four musicians are. If Fanny has a drawback, it has to be their tite arrangements, leaving no room for spontaneous jamming or solos to any degree.

After a tune called "Blind Alley," Fanny has won the crowd. A great treatment of Marvin Gaye's "Ain't That Peculiar" expands their range further.

Then, after the customary "out of state band talks in a Texas accent to amuse the crowd" part of the show, they whip into the Springfield's "Special Care" and do a surprisingly fresh treatment.

Fanny closes the show in the same manner they opened, rocking full on. An ovation brings them back for an encore and that's it. The dudes are all grinning and the chicks look proud as everybody staggers out the door. The questions are answered: Fanny is for real. They excite.

-- Tom Flowers

## Released After 31 Years

HOWELL, Mich. (LNS) — Bert Chapman, 68, has been released from Pontiac State Hospital after spending the last 31 years in Michigan mental institutions for an alleged homosexual offense.

He has been confined as a "criminal sexual psychopath" since 1940.

Over the years, Chapman's case was twice appealed to the Michigan Supreme Court, but each time he was deemed a "menace to society," and his confinement was upheld. The law under which he was convicted was repealed in 1967, and now at last, he is free.

## Menuhin

cont. from 7

the high point of the afternoon.

The Beethoven Sonata, No. 7, Op. 30, no. 2, was a glowing example of ensemble work. In this piece I first became aware of how sensitive and solid an accompanist Menuhin has in his sister, Hephzibah. If one must criti-

cize her playing it would be to note a little lack of depth in the sound and some difficulty in sustaining a line. I feel that much of this is the fault of the instrument she played. The Steinway concert grand in Jones Hall must be described as barely adequate. The rhythms, unexpected accents and dynamic surprises of Beethoven were all done with good taste and careful workmanship. Mr. Menuhin's playing, however, was at times scratchy and squeaky. True, Beethoven is not always delicate — but never ugly.

If I seem somewhat harsh in my opinion of a man who is one of the

great names of this century, it must be that I expected to be inspired by his performance and was not. Apparently much of the audience did not share my disappointment. With a single exception there was applause after every movement of every piece. Yehudi and Hephzibah seem accustomed to this distracting practice; they bowed and acknowledged the applause several times, even in the middle of a sonata! I suppose this is the way with cults and their heroes. Beethoven, Brahms or Bartok would not have put up with it.

-- Herschel ben-Avrum

Being the adventures of a young man  
whose principal interests are rape,  
ultra-violence and Beethoven.

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# Space In

## TV

Fri, Feb 4 -

6:30 pm - **SICKLE CELL ANEMIA**, hereditary disorder which affects large numbers of black people, almost no whites, poorly studied for this reason. Should be worth seeing. Ch 13

7:30 pm - **M**, a suspense classic (1930), starring Peter Lorre as a demented child murderer. Ch 8 (educational?)

9:30 pm - **THE WORLDS OF VON BRAUN**, Werner von Braun (formerly of the Third Reich, now a NASA administrator) talks about the future of Our Friend, The Rocket. Ch 2

Sat, Feb 5 -

4:00 pm - **THOROUGHBREDS DON'T CRY**, Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland. Ch 2

10:30 pm - **FREUD**, Montgomery Clift, as the Viennese psychiatrist, will wet-dream his way into your heart. Ch 13

12:00 pm - **SOMEBODY UP THERE LIKES ME**, Paul Newman. Ch 2

Sun, Feb 6 -

8:00 pm - **CHINA, AN OPEN DOOR**, now that our prez has clutched the People's Republic to his aging bosom, we can expect to see a lot more of these "China Reports." Most will undoubtedly be awful, but at least they're trying. Ch 39

Mon, Feb 7 -

7:00 pm - **U. S. A.**, musical version of the Dos Passos novel stars Edward G. Robinson & James Farentino. Ch 8

Tue, Feb 8 -

7:30 pm - **BLACK JOURNAL**, "Is It Too Late?" Twelve black leaders discuss a wide range of concerns. Ch 8

Wed, Feb 9 -

8:00 pm - **GREAT AMERICAN DREAM MACHINE**, features highlights from earlier programs (and this series' lights have been pretty high) Ch 8

9:00 pm - **SPEAKING FREELY**, guest is Bernadette Devlin. Ch 8

Thu, Feb 10 -

7:30 pm - **ABRAHAM LINCOLN**, first sound film by D.W. Griffith ("Birth of a Nation") stars Walter Huston, Jason Robards, Sr., and Una Merkle. Ch 8

Fri, Feb 11 -

7:30 pm - **SEVEN SAMURAI**, the uncut version (3 1/2 hours) of Kurosawa's epic battle film. Stars Toshiro Mifune. Ch 8

8:00 pm - **THE MAN WHO SHOT LIBERTY VALANCE**, if you prefer John Wayne to Toshiro Mifune. Ch 11

9:30 pm - **THE WORLDS OF VON BRAUN** - "In German and English I know how to count down / and I'm learning Chinese," says Werner von Braun. Ch 2

12:55 am - **DUCK DUCK**, the Marx Brothers (can you name all seven?) Ch 11

Sat, Feb 12 -

2:30 pm - **GODZILLA'S REVENGE**, all Tokyo shudders as the mammoth monster goes on another spree, in Technicolor. Ch 11

7:30 pm - **HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES**, features the famous line: "Dr. Watson, that sounds like a rotten mean dawg out there." Ch 13

Sun, Feb 13 -

8:00 pm - **ELIZABETH R**, first chapter in a six-part biography of England's greatest queen. Ch 8

8:00 pm - **CLEOPATRA**, Part I, the movie that made Eddie Fisher famous without him even being in it. Ch 13

10:30 pm - **ZIEGFELD FOLLIES**, Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, and the MGM stable. Ch 2

11:00 pm - **THE TRUE STORY OF JESSE JAMES**, Ch 13

Mon, Feb 14 -

3:30 pm - **BACHELOR FLAT**, Tuesday Weld, (of Dobie Gillis fame) & Richard Beymer (of West Side Story). Looks like a modern classic. Ch 11

8:00 pm - **ST. VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE**, Jason Robards & George Segal salute one of America's finest holidays in their quaint Old World fashion. Ch 39

Cont. on 12

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# TV

Cont. from 11

Mon, Feb 14 cont.

8:00 pm - CLEDPATRA, Part II, Ch 13

10:30 pm - A PATCH OF BLUE, Sidney Pottier, Ch 11

Tue, Feb 15 -

7:30 pm - CHINA LOST AND FOUND, covers 250 sparkling years of Chinese - U.S. relations. Stars Teddy Roosevelt & Olick Nixon, Ch 2

8:00 pm - THE TRAIN, Burt Lancaster, Paul Scofield, Ch 39

8:30 pm - BLACK JOURNAL, "The Young Black Lawyers," Ch 8

## MOVIES

### RICE UNIVERSITY

Films at the Media Center are absolutely and incontrovertibly FREE; the Center is in the stadium parking lot, off University Blvd. Some very good films the next couple of weeks. All shows at 8:00 pm, FREE.

Fri, Feb 4 - BABY DOLL, Kari Malden, Eli Wallach, Carroll Baker, directed by Elia Kazan.

Sat, Feb 5 - FIST IN HIS POCKETS, Bellocchio.

Sun, Feb 6 - INTRUDER IN THE DUST, 1949 Film based on the (somewhat obscure) novel by William Faulkner. Fine movie.

Fri, Feb 11 - WILD STRAWBERRIES, Ingmar Bergman.

Sat, Feb 12 - To be Announced

Sun, Feb 13 - SMILES OF A SUMMER NIGHT, Ingmar Bergman.

### OTHER SCENES

(Listings, such as they are, are open to change. But then again, what isn't these days?)

SACCO AND VANZETTI - Our pick hit of the week. The trial of two anarchists in the 1920s. At the none-too-proletarian Windsor Theatre.

STRAW ODGS - Oustin Hoffman in another of Sam Peckinpah's blood operas. At the Village and Gaylynn Terrace.

MATA HARI - The Park I continues their Greta Garbo festival with this fine offering.

HARDLO AND MAUDE - The love of a demented 20-year-old man for an eccentric 80-year-old woman. Bizarre. At the Galleria Cinema.

## THEATRE

### ALLEY THEATRE

SPOON RIVER ANTHOLDGY - Directed by William Trotman; features musical combo with guitars, banjo, violin, recorder & kazoo. Tues-Fri, 8:30 pm; Sat, 5 & 9 pm; Sun, 2:30 & 8:30 pm. Thru Feb 27, 615 Texas Ave 228-8421.

MY SWEET CHARLIE - play by Houstonian David Westheimer; directed by William Glover. Thurs, Fri - 8:30 pm; Sat, 5 & 9 pm, thru Feb 19. Alley's Arena stage. 228-8421.

### CLEAR CREEK COUNTRY THEATRE

LILIES OF THE FIELD - Directed by Morgan Redman; stars Willie Dirden, Ed Muths. Weekends thru Feb 12, 8:15 pm. League City. 932-3714.

### STUDIOS

THE WIZARD OF OZ - Prince St. Players musical adaptation. This one changed directors, and some of the cast, mid-stream; Chris Wilson directed it herself, in the end. For info about times, cost & internal dynamics, call PR 1-3851. Or just check your I Ching. Houston Music Theatre, SW Fwy at Fondren.

### RICE PLAYERS

A DELICATE BALANCE - Edward Albee play. Feb 7-12. 8 pm. Hamman Hall, Rice U. 528-4141, ex 638; weekends, JA 8-4554.

### FONDREN STREET THEATRE

PINDCHIO - multi-media musical kids show. Directed by Carl Deese. Sat, 11 am & 2 pm; Sun, 2 pm. Thru Feb. Fondren at Daffodil, 783-9930.

Cont. on 13

# Hot luck

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Double knit shirts. Were \$14. Now \$8.

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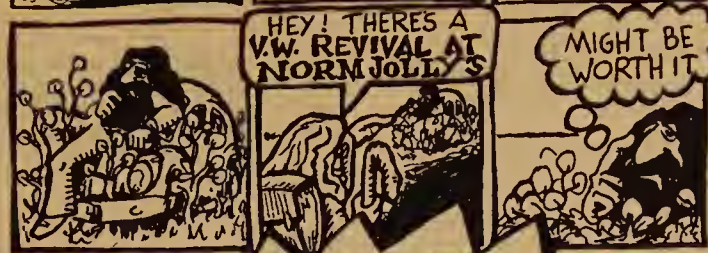


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## THEATRE

Cont. from 12

**CHANNING PLAYERS**  
CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF — Tennessee Williams classic. Directed by Lyda Miller. Stars Oscar James & Bonnie Ambrose. Feb 3-5 & Feb 11-12. Curtain 8:30 pm. First Unitarian Church, 5210 Fannin.

**HOUSTON MIME THEATRE** — 13 skits in pantomime. Sat, Feb 5 — 8:30 pm. Plus two childrens' performances, Feb 5-6 — 1:30 pm. Kaplan Theatre, Jewish Community Center, 5601 S. Braeswood, 729-3200.

**PLAYWRIGHT'S SHOWCASE**  
DISCOURSE VIETNAM — Peter Weiss play, never before performed on American continent. Directed by Roger Glade. Opens Fri, Feb 18, & will run weekends thru March. Fri & Sat nites, 8 pm. Autry House, 6265 S. Main, 524-3168.

**UH DRAMA DEPT**  
THE RESISTABLE RISE OF ARTURO UI — Bertolt Brecht's "gangster spectacle" that parallels the growth of a Chicago mob to that of Hitler and the Nazi party in pre-war Germany. Directed by Cecil Pickett. Feb 16-19, 8:30 pm. Cullen Auditorium, UH, 748-6600 ex 608.

**AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE** — opening of US tour. Features stars Carla Fracci, Natalia Makarova, Ted Kivitt & Ivan Nagy. Presented by Society for Performing Arts. Feb 9-12, 8:30 pm; Feb 13, 8 pm. Jones Hall.

## ART

**MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS**  
(1001 Bissonnet)  
**KEMPE COLLECTION** — collection of Chinese gold, silver & porcelain. Jones Galleries.

**CERAMIC SCULPTURE** — School of Art gallery, thru April 2.  
**NATURE AND FOCUS:** Looking at American Painting in the 19th Century Masterson Jr. Gallery.  
**DAYS ON THE RANGE** — artists of American west. Cullinan Hall.  
**MUSEUM SCHOOL OF ART** — spring term begins Feb 7; runs thru May 27. Registration thru Feb 5, 529-7659.

**INSTITUTE FOR THE ARTS**  
**SELECTION FROM THE MENIL COLLECTION** — works from the Menil Foundation & family at the Rice Museum. Thru April 15. University and Stockton.  
**EVE SONNEMAN** — photographs dealing with "peoples' interactions with each other and with their environment." Media Center, Univ & Stockton. 528-4141, ex 1396.  
**E.J. BELLOG: STORYVILLE PORTRAITS** — 34 photos of Storyville prostitutes. (Storyville is the red-light district in New Orleans.) Sewall Hall Gallery, Rice campus.

**LECTURE** — Robert Rosenblum, art historian from New York, will speak on "Abstract Expressionism and the Northern Romantic Tradition," Thurs, Feb 3, 4 pm. Sewall Hall, Rm 301, Rice Univ. Open to public. free.

**UNIV OF ST THOMAS**  
**STUDENT SHOW** — 3812 Yoakum.

**ART LEAGUE** — juried membership show. 1953 Montrose.

**ARTIST OUTLET COMMUNITY GALLERY** — black artists. 2603 Blodgett.

**THE BLACK GALLERY** — paintings, sculpture & crafts by black artists. Operation Breadbasket, 2413 Dowling.

**ADEPT GALLERY** — "Promises, Promises" One man show with paintings, prose, poetry by Luther G. Walker. 1617 Blissonnet.

**CHILDREN'S STUDIO** — Contemporary Arts Museum kids classes begin spring semester week of Feb 7. Call 526-3129 for details.

**CARVEL GALLERY** — original Eskimo stone graphics. 3719 Westheimer.

**GALLERY OF ORIGINAL ARTS** — works by Huntsville Prison inmates, plus surrealism by Norman Johnson. Farmers Market, Town & Cntry Village.

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Weekdays at:  
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Sat & Sun at: 1:00 - 2:45 -  
4:30 - 6:20 - 8:05 - 9:55

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New York Times

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Music Hall, 2 shows: 7 & 10:30 pm.  
Tickets at Disc Records & Paisley Co.

CHICAGO — Feb 6, Colliseum

VIENNA BOYS CHOIR — Jones Hall,  
Feb 4, 8 pm.

EARL SCRUGGS — plus Mike Murphy,  
University of Houston University Cen-  
ter, Houston Room, 8 pm, 748-6600.

THE TEMPTATIONS — Colliseum, Feb 19,  
8 pm.

THE PHILANDERERS — British folk  
group at the World Trade Center Club,  
Feb 4, 7 pm, 1520 Texas Ave.

ARTHUR RUBINSTEIN — Music Hall,  
Feb 17, 8:30 pm, 227-1111.

DALE EVANS & ROY ROGERS — Hou-  
ston Rodeo and Livestock Show, Astro-  
dome, Feb 25.

## INS & OUTS

### WELFARE SERVICES

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### NAME THAT QUOTE

"Those who would tear our country apart  
or try to bring down its Government are  
enemies, whether here or abroad, whether  
destroying libraries or classrooms on a  
college campus or firing at American  
troops from a rice paddy in Southeast Asia"  
(SEE ANSWER BELOW)

### SCIENTISTS

The Federation of American Scientists is a  
national organization which is attempting  
to break out of the symbiotic coupling be-  
tween Science and The Military. They are  
lobbying against the new "weapons systems"  
especially the ABM, and have also provided  
expert testimony against such Bad Things  
as the SST, bio/chem warfare, the Amchitka  
nuclear test. Write the Federation of Amer-  
ican Scientists, 203 C St, NE, Washington,  
DC 20002, for more info.

### ANSWER TO NAME THAT QUOTE

Spilo T. Agnew (who else?)

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liberation, they are frequently exploitative of sexuality, especially that of women and  
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guideline for determining which are and which aren't. We will generally accept ads how-  
ever, for roommates which specify gay or straight, male or female, to avoid possible con-  
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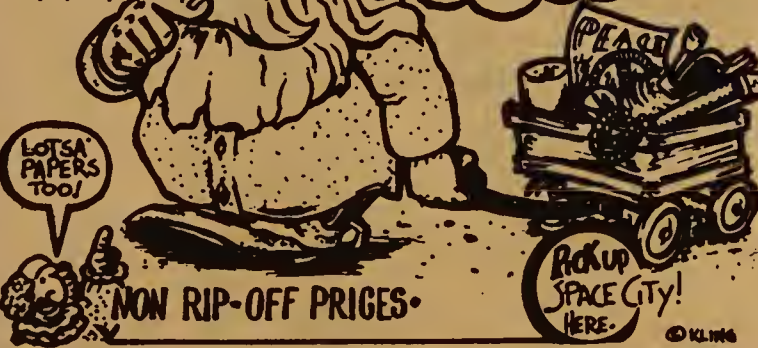
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S M T W T F S

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S M T W T F S

Imagine there's no countries  
it isn't hard to do  
nothing to kill or die for  
and no religion too  
imagine all the people  
sharing all the world...

Imagine no possessions  
i wonder if you can  
no need for greed or hunger  
a brotherhood of man  
imagine all the people  
sharing all the world...

JOHN LENNON



HOUSTON • SAN ANTONIO